

Father Francisco Ortega
Pastor, Sacred Heart Parish
819 N. 16th Avenue
Melrose Park, Illinois 60160

Ms. Courtney Avery
Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and
Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

RECEIVED

OCT 10 2018

HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Re: Melrose Village Dialysis (Proj. No. 17-029)

Dear Ms. Avery,

On behalf of Sacred Heart Parish and the greater Melrose Park community, I write to you in support of having improved access to dialysis services for area residents.

Sacred Heart Parish dates back to 1893 and we have long been a feature of the Melrose Park community. I joined the church as Pastor four years ago and in that time I have seen firsthand the strengths of our village and the needs in our community. I am fortunate to celebrate many happy moments with my parish – baptism, marriage and the joys of everyday life. I also comfort them in times of need – prolonged illness, hardship, and death.

Through this lens and my experience counseling families affected by illness, I welcome efforts to improve access to health care in Melrose Park. I often see firsthand the toll that chronic disease can have on a person and his or her family, both from an emotional perspective but also from a logistical one. This is especially true of illnesses like End-Stage Renal Disease because those affected rely heavily on dialysis services for their continued well-being. Dialysis appointments last several hours and each patient needs the treatment three days per week for the rest of their lives. Kidney Disease also disproportionately affects the Hispanic community who face 150% times the risk of others. With our large Hispanic population in Melrose Park, appropriate access to dialysis services is therefore of special importance for our community.

As your Board may be aware, the two existing Melrose Park dialysis clinics are nearing full capacity and have difficulty accommodating new patients, as well as the sometimes challenging schedules of existing patients. This proposed clinic will greatly improve the situation and will also help our village meet anticipated growth in area dialysis needs. In these ways, the clinic will help alleviate some of the strain of living with a chronic disease. On behalf of Sacred Heart Parish and Melrose Park residents, I request that the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board approve the proposed clinic.

Sincerely,


Father Francisco Ortega